

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 15148

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT UR

SUBJ: SUSLOV ON DETENTE

1. SUMMARY: IN PUBLIC ADDRESS GIVEN IN LITHUANIA AND PUBLISHED IN FULL THERE, POLITBURO MEMBER SUSLOV EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR DETENTE POLICY AND LIP SERVICE TO BREZHNEV'S FOREIGN POLICY ROLE. PRAVDA ACCOUNT OF SPEECH HAS DRAWN OUR ATTENTION TO SUSLOV'S DISCUSSION OF NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF DETENTE BY OMITTING THEM (ALONG WITH HIS SHARP CRITICISM OF PRC LEADERSHIP). PRAVDA THUS GAVE MISTAKEN IMPRESSION THAT SUSLOV HAD ONLY POSTIVE THINGS TO SAY ABOUT DETENTE. SUSBSTANCE OF SUSLOV SPEECH WAS IN LINE WITH HIS ROLE AS CHIEF PARTY IDEOLOGIST AND SEEMS TO SUPPORT RUMORS OF HIS NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD DETENTE. END SUMMARY.

2. POLITBURO MEMBER AND PARTY SECRETARY MIKHAIL SUSLOV DELIVERED MAJOR SPEECH IN VILNIUS NOVEMBER 28 DURING CEREMONIES AWARDDING THE ORDER OF FRIENDSHIP OF PEOPLES TO THE LITHUANIAN REPUBLIC. FULL SPEECH IS PUBLISHED IN SOVETSKAY LITVA NOVEMBER 29.) CHOICE OF SUSLOV FOR PRESENTING HONOR IS NOT SURPRISING SINCE HE IS ONLY INDIVIDUAL IN INNER LEADERSHIP CIRCLE WHO HAD NOT YET PARTICIPATED IN SIMILAR CEREMONY AND BECAUSE OF HIS
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SERVICE IN LITHUANIAN IN PERIOD OF CONSILITATION AT END

OF WORLD WAR II.

3. IN FOREIGN POLICY PORTION OF SPEECH SUSLOV OBSERVES THAT SOVIET GOAL IS TO GIVE IRREVERSIBLE CHARACTER TO DETENTE, GIVES CREDIT TO BREZHNEV'S ROLE IN DEVELOPING PRESENT STAGE OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AND DECLARES HIM WORTHY RECIPIENT OF LENIN PEACE PRIZE. WHILE ALSO MENTIONING ROLES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND POLITBURO IN THIS CONNECTION, SUSLOV DOES NOT PURSUE COLLECTIVITY LINE BY MENTIONING CONTRIBUTIONS OF FELLOW POLITBURO MEMBERS KOSYGIN, PODORNIY, AND KIRILENKO DURING RECENT MONTHS.

4. WHILE PRAISING GENERAL COURSE OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY, SUSLOV IS QUICK TO POINT OUT OBSTACLES IN ITS PATH. ACKNOWLEDGING THAT CURRENT POSITIVE TURNAROUND IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IS RESULT OF REALISTIC ATTITUDES OF LEADERS OF MAJOR IMPERIALIST POWERS, SUSLOV CAUTIONS THAT REALISM STEMS "FROM NEED TO ADAPT TO NEW CONDITIONS AND IN NOW WAY TESTIFIES TO CHANGE IN BASIC NATURE OF IMPREIALISM." HE WARNS THAT SUBSTANTIAL FORCES STAND AGAINST RELAXATION OF TENSION AND CAUTIONS THAT RECAUTIONARY CIRCLES CONTINUE TO PREACH WORD OF SOVIET MILITARY THREAT WHILE MAKING DEMANDS THAT IN RETURN FOR DETENTE SOVIETS MUST MAKE ONE-SIDED CONCESSIONS. HE ALSO NOTES THEIR ATTEMPTS TO INERFERE IN SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

5. SUSLOV CALLS FOR CONTINUATION OF STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST IDEOLGOCIAL DIVERSION AND ATTEMPTS TO REVIVE THE BOURGEOIS THEROY OF CONVERGENCE. HE STRESSES THAT POLICY OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE BETWEEN COUNTRIES OF DIF-FERING SOUS "DOES NOT MEAN BLUITING OF CLASS STRUGGLE IN INTERNATIONAL ARENA."

6. SUSLOV TAKES A PREDICTABLY TOUGH STANCE ON CHINA. HE PAYS LIP SERVICE TO THE CURRENT LINE OF CALLING FOR "NORMAL-IZATION" OF SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, BUT THERE IS AN UNDER-CURRENT OF BILLERNESS AS HE ACCUSES THE CCP OF SLIDING TO THE RIGHT IN A DE FACTO ALIGNMENT WITH THE IMPERIALSITS AND FOLLOWING AN ANTI-SOCIALIST FOREIGN POLICY.
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7. AS HAS BEEN CUSTOMARY ON SIMILAR OCCASIONS WHEN POLITBURO MEMBERS DELIVERED SPEECHES IN REPUBLICAN CAPITALS, PRAVDA (NOVEMBER 29) ONLY COVERED SUMMARY OF SUSLOV'S SPEECH. BY OMITTING THE CAVEATS ABOUT DETENTE WHICH SUSLOV DISCUSSED AT LENGTH, PRAVDA SUMMARY GIVES THE IMPRESSION THAT SUSLOV STANDS UNEQUIVOCABLY BEHIND CURRENT SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES.

8. COMMENT. REPORTS HAVE LONG CIRCULATED IN MOSCOW THAT SUSLOV IS A LEADING DOUBTER OF CURRENT DIRECTION OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY, BASED ON SUCH EVIDENCE AS HIS JULY 14 SPEECH. A ROMANIAN DIPLOMAT, IN DISCUSSING POSSIBLE SUSLOV RESERVATIONS ABOUT CURRENT FOREIGN POLICY, DESCRIBED HIM AS "MAN WHO HAD OUTLIVED HIS TIMES." AS CHIEF PARTY IDEOLOGIST, SUSLOV UNDOUBTEDLY AND PERHAPS NATURALLY HAS CONCERNS THAT POPULISTS WILL NOT UNDERSTAND DISTINCTION BETWEEN POLICY OF COEXISTENCE ON GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS AND NEED FOR CONTINUATION OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE. WHILE HE PRESUMABLY SHARES CONVICTION THAT STABLE WORLD IS PRECONDITION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALIST SOCIETY AND SEES GENERAL DETENTE POLICY AS ADDITIONAL MEANS OF ENHANCING USSR'S INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY, HIS ADDRESS INDICATES THAT AT THIS STAGE HE IS SOMEWHAT MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE HAZARDS OF DETENTE THAN THE MUTUAL BENEFITS WHICH ARE OFTEN TOUTED BY BREZHNEV. WE NOTE THAT SUSLOV HAS JOINED IN THE ATTEMPT TO RESURRECT THE "CONVERGENCE THEORY" IN ORDER TO KNOCK IT DOWN; SOME OBSERVERS SPECULATE THAT THIS IS DIRECTED AT INTERNAL, RATHER THAN EXTERNAL, OPPONENTS. WE WONDER WHETHER SUSLOV'S SINGLING OUT OF BREZHNEV'S OCTOBER 26 SPEECH MAY NOT REFLECT SATISFACTION WITH NEGATIVE UNDERTONES OF THAT SPEECH (MOSCOW 13615).DUBS

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